REMARKS

The Office Action has imposed a requirement for restriction pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 121 to one of five identified inventions. As stated above, Applicants provisionally elect the claims of Group I, with traverse. The Office Action has identified claims 1 - 4 as constituting the claims corresponding to the invention of Group I, classified in class 435, subclass 374. The Office Action has identified claims 5 - 9 as constituting the claims corresponding to the invention of Group II, also classified in class 435, subclass 374. Applicants respectfully note that the claims from both of these groups, according to the Office Action, are classified in the same class and subclass. Nor has the Office Action identified a separate field of search in support of the restriction to these two groups of claims. Consequently, it is appropriate to observe that examination of the claims of these two groups together should impose no extra burden on the Examiner in terms of searching the requisite prior art. Furthermore, Applicants note that a Preliminary Amendment was filed on February 12, 2002 in the instant case in which claims 5 - 8 were cancelled. Thus, of the claims identified in the Office Action as belonging to Group II, only claim 9 remains for substantive prosecution. In light of this, Applicants submit that it would be appropriate, based on identical classification, and a presumption that separate fields of search are not implicated in the absence of an affirmative statement to the contrary, that the restriction of claims 1 - 9 to two groups of claims be withdrawn and that claim 9 be examined along with provisionally elected claims 1 - 4.[1]

OK

[1] See MPEP § 809.02:

> Where, however, the classification is the same and the field of search is the same and there is no clear indication of separate

The Office Action has identified claims 10 - 18 as constituting the claims corresponding to the invention of Group III, classified in class 435, subclass 2. The Office Action has identified claims 19 - 26 as constituting the claims corresponding to the invention of Group IV, also classified in class 435, subclass 2. Applicants respectfully note that the claims from both of these groups, according to the Office Action, are classified in the same class and subclass. Nor has the Office Action identified a separate field of search in support of the restriction to these two groups of claims.[1] Consequently, it is appropriate to observe that examination of the claims of these two groups together should impose no extra burden on the Examiner in terms of searching the prior art. In light of this, Applicants request that the restriction of these two groups of claims be withdrawn, and that claims 10 - 26 be examined together.

Respectfully submitted,

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future classifications and field of search, no reasons exist for dividing among related inventions.